

Gateway Primary School

Netheravon Close, Carterton, OX18 3SF

Inspection dates 28–29 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- From their individual starting points, pupils make inadequate progress. Achievement in Key Stage 1 requires improvement and is inadequate in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching over time is inadequate, and as a result too many pupils underachieve in Years 1 to 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Expectations of what pupils can do are too low in some classes.
- Pupils' progress has not been accurately tracked. This means work for pupils does not build on what they already know and understand.
- Marking and feedback to pupils are inconsistent across subjects and different year groups and do not help them to improve their work.
- Some pupils settle slowly to their work and become restless because teachers do not set clear boundaries for pupils' behaviour.
- The leadership improvement plans do not sufficiently show how improvements will impact on pupils' achievement.
- In recent years, school leaders, including governors, have not done enough to check on the progress of pupils or how well teachers have been teaching. As a result, leadership and management are inadequate.
- Governors do not hold the school rigorously to account.

The school has the following strengths

- The newly appointed headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of staff, governors and parents. Pupils feel safe in school and attend regularly.
- Adults in the 'nurture group' provide effective support to pupils in developing their emotional well-being.
- Individual care and attention and good support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs foster their personal development well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which three were joint observations with either the headteacher or assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors attended a school assembly and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors, pupils and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors spoke informally to a number of parents as they brought their children to school.
- The inspectors took account of 48 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View); they also analysed 22 questionnaires received from staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring of documents and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lucy Maughan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

Jill Arnold

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils in the local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and service children) is above average. In this school almost all of these pupils are from service families with very few from the other two groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the usual times is higher than the national average.
- In 2012, the school met government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- A number of senior leaders and managers are new to the post since September 2013, including the headteacher and assistant headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be at least good or better throughout the school and so raise pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring:
 - teaching is consistently challenging and activities move at a brisk pace to keep pupils engaged and focused on learning
 - teachers plan activities and ask questions to challenge pupils at their different ability levels
 - teachers make careful checks in lessons on pupils' understanding and intervene quickly to correct any misunderstanding
 - that teachers provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in meaningful contexts in a range of subjects
 - high quality marking is used consistently across the school to show pupils clearly how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve their work
 - staff receive more guidance and training on the school's policies for managing pupils' behaviour and for encouraging positive attitudes to learning so that all staff follow the policy in the same way.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that school improvement plans show clearly the intended impact of actions on pupils' achievement
 - providing training for middle leaders and managers so that they improve their skills of monitoring and evaluation
 - ensuring the school's assessment and tracking system accurately reflects pupils' work
 - developing the role of the governing body further so that it supports and challenges the school

more effectively.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils' achievement, from typically average starting points, is inadequate. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make progress that requires improvement and in Key Stage 2 progress is inadequate.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the phonics (letters and sounds that they make) screening check at the end of Year 1 dropped in 2013 to below the national average.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been broadly in line with that found nationally over time and this represents expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has declined. In 2013, pupils in Year 6 attained levels that were significantly below those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' overall progress through Key Stage 2 has been too low over the last three years. In 2013, the proportion of pupils achieving expected and better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. The school met the government's floor standard in 2012, but indications are that this minimum expectation was not met in 2013.
- School data for pupils currently in Key Stage 2 indicate that pupils have not made enough progress in some classes in the past so that Year 6 are currently working at levels that are below those found nationally for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Lesson observations, scrutiny of work and hearing pupils read confirm that too many pupils continue to underachieve.
- More-able pupils make poor progress and too few attain the higher levels in end-of-key-stage assessments. Pupils do not acquire higher-order skills; for example, their mathematical skills related to solving problems in real-life situations are underdeveloped.
- Over time, pupils have made insufficient gains in their learning because assessment information provided by teachers has been inaccurate. Recently, new leaders have acted to establish an accurate system for tracking pupil progress. However, not all staff use this information well enough to ensure pupils make progress as quickly as they should.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is too small to make valid comparisons with national averages. However, these pupils make the same inadequate progress as other pupils in school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make expected progress overall, with some making good progress because their learning needs are well met and intervention by adults is well targeted.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Inadequate teaching over time has led to underachievement for most groups of pupils. Too much teaching is still not good enough to ensure that pupils make the progress they should.
- Too many pupils make poor progress in lessons and fail to improve the standard of their work enough. This is because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Teachers do not always provide pupils with enough challenging activities to ensure that they are clear about what is expected of them in their work and behaviour. As a result, pupils become restless and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The pace in some lessons is too slow and teachers' questioning does not probe pupils' understanding or develop their learning.
- Teachers often fail to move pupils' learning on quickly enough. This occurs when pupils have clearly grasped the ideas being presented but are then given too little time to move on to more challenging tasks. At such times, progress for more-able pupils in particular, is inadequate.
- The questions adults ask do not challenge pupils' understanding and encourage pupils to think things through for themselves.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent across the school. In some cases, work is regularly marked

with clear guidance on how pupils' work can be improved further. However, this is not consistently applied in all year groups and subjects. Too often incorrect grammar, spelling and punctuation are missed which means that errors are repeated. Poorly presented work is too readily accepted.

- In some lessons observed, teaching assistants provided effective support for pupils with specific needs and abilities; however, in other lessons observed teaching assistants were not deployed effectively to support pupils' learning.
- The curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in English and mathematics. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length to develop their grammar and punctuation skills. Also, mathematics relies too much on number work with little opportunity for pupils to apply their skills to real-life situations and problem solving.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. The work set matches pupils' needs and interests, and inspires pupils. In a mixed Years 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were challenged to use their skills to solve problems relating to percentages. The teacher skilfully adapted the lesson to meet the needs of all pupils, enabling them to make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Where teaching is inadequate or requires improvement, pupils lose concentration, their interest wanes and a few pupils demonstrate low-level disruptive behaviour.
- Inconsistencies in teaching and in the expectations of behaviour from different adults in school have had a negative effect on the attitudes of a few pupils to learning. Most pupils want to learn. As soon as they enter the classrooms they are ready and eager to do so. However, they lose concentration which means they do not learn as much as they could when lessons lack challenge and activities do not accurately match their ability.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. They know about different kinds of bullying and say that bullying does not occur at their school. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet.
- Pupils, staff and parents all expressed positive views about behaviour. Pupils have a good understanding of the new 'zone' system for behaviour and say it works well. Around the school, pupils are polite and courteous to each other.
- An above average proportion of pupils, mostly service children, join the school partway through a key stage. They are welcomed into the school and benefit from the good levels of support the school provides. This enables them to settle well socially and take a full part in the life of the school.
- Pupils are eager to take on a range of responsibilities in school, including team captains, school council representatives and playground monitors. Older pupils understand their responsibility to model good behaviour and safe practice. Most pupils behave well in the playground and are polite and considerate.

The leadership and management

are inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, the school's leaders and governors have not made the necessary improvements to impact on pupils' achievement and raise the quality of teaching. Consequently, the school has declined from being satisfactory to being inadequate. The school is not demonstrating that it can improve further.
- Some middle leaders and managers are new to the post and have not yet received the training to develop their skills to accurately monitor and evaluate progress in their subject.
- Over time, the monitoring of teaching and the evaluation of actions to improve pupils' learning, particularly as pupils progressed through Key Stage 2, have not been rigorous enough to sustain improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in all classes.
- Improvement planning generally identifies the right priorities, but is not sharp enough to bring

about rapid change because plans are not clearly linked to improving pupils' achievement.

- The school provides a range of appropriate topics, and a range of sporting, social and musical experiences. However, the persistent inadequacies in the development of pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills mean that the promotion of equality is inadequate.
- The newly appointed headteacher has a clear view of what needs to be done and has acted quickly to gain the support of staff and governors. In the short time since her appointment, she has made a number of changes to improve performance.
- The headteacher has reviewed pupils' physical well-being and provision for physical education to decide how best to use the additional government money for sport. Currently, pupils take part in a range of after-school activities.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements.
- The local authority has provided support that has led to some improvement, particularly in supporting leaders and managers who are new to the role, but this has not yet had sufficient time to reverse a legacy of underachievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not tackled weaknesses in leadership, teaching and pupils' progress until recently. They have a growing understanding of how pupils' achievement compares to all schools nationally, that pupils' progress is inadequate, and of the urgent need to maintain a strong focus on teaching in order to secure better outcomes for pupils. They have benefited from training to make governance more effective, including ensuring that plans to spend the pupil premium are targeted more effectively. Until recently, the governing body has relied too heavily on information provided by senior leaders and managers. Governors are very supportive of the school, and particularly the new headteacher, and are developing a presence through their regular visits; recently, they have established a link between teachers' pay and the progress of their pupils. More needs to be done to ensure that governors hold the school rigorously to account.
 - An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	123016
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	426491

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Fox
Headteacher	Sharon Mullins
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2011
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